
HOUSE BILL 1635

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Representatives McCoy, B. Sullivan, Simpson, Dunshee, Upthegrove and Linville

Read first time 01/24/2007. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to water conservation development strategies;
2 creating a new section; and making appropriations.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** (1) The department of ecology is directed to
5 study and review innovative strategies and processes for supporting
6 conservation development strategies in the rural area, particularly
7 related to provision of water. The objectives of this study are to
8 provide certainty and improve water flows in impaired or at-risk basins
9 through a variety of strategies, while advancing innovative
10 conservation development. In particular, the purpose of this study is
11 to create a supporting water management and conservation strategy to
12 the land conservation strategy being explored in the rural village
13 concept, which proposes to consolidate growth from existing and zoned
14 lots into a compact and environmentally friendly footprint while
15 concurrently conserving large swaths of farm and forest lands and
16 natural areas. A combined effort to conserve water and land and
17 provide for a new style of development in keeping with rural character
18 will improve rural quality of life and economic health by: Providing
19 new alternatives for environmentally friendly, compact rural

1 development; providing housing that is affordable to people who live
2 and work in rural areas; reducing conversion of resource and rural
3 lands and protect the ecosystem services and products they provide; and
4 provide options for landowners to achieve the optimal real estate value
5 of their properties.

6 (2) The department of ecology, in partnership with the cascade land
7 conservancy, must contract for and coordinate a two-year study. The
8 scope of the study includes review and analysis of issues related to
9 establishing, siting, and obtaining regulatory approval for sustainable
10 water management associated with the rural village concept. The study
11 must involve the three watersheds selected to accept a rural village
12 demonstration project. Water management issues to be addressed include
13 but are not limited to the following:

14 (a) The use of a water banking system and trust water rights as a
15 mechanism to manage existing water rights within the pilot study areas;

16 (b) The exploration of feasibility and means for water right
17 transfers, including conversion of surface water rights to groundwater
18 withdrawals or other water right transfer alternatives;

19 (c) Issues involving determinations of current and future water
20 availability and a characterization of potential impairment of senior
21 water rights;

22 (d) Opportunities to compliment and support other local
23 environmental and land use goals as identified in watershed planning,
24 shared salmon strategy plans, and the growth management act;

25 (e) Applicability of the *Ecology v. Campbell & Gwinn, L.L.C.* (146
26 Wn.2d 1) decision, specifically local use of, and options to manage,
27 the number and density of exempt wells projected to support future
28 growth;

29 (f) Opportunities for enhancement of subbasin instream flows. This
30 includes examining specific strategies for achieving benefits to a
31 demonstration project's subbasin and overall watershed health from
32 innovative, low-impact development techniques for proposed rural
33 village, land conservation measures and reduced development footprint,
34 along with expansive water conservation measures within the rural
35 village, in the subbasin and across the landscape; and

36 (g) Explore the potential to use new septic/sewer technology, such
37 as membrane technology, to provide reclaimed water for nonpotable uses.

1 (3) The department of ecology, in partnership with the cascade land
2 conservancy, must seek matching federal resources, including technical
3 support from the United States environmental protection agency.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** (1) The sum of two hundred fifty thousand
5 dollars, or as much thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for
6 the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008, from the general fund to the
7 department of ecology for the purposes of this act.

8 (2) The sum of two hundred fifty thousand dollars, or as much
9 thereof as may be necessary, is appropriated for the fiscal year ending
10 June 30, 2009, from the general fund to the department of ecology for
11 the purposes of this act.

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